

The District

✓ SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT • 9229 HIGHWAY 49 • GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI 39503 • (228) 868-2311 FAX (228) 868-7094
August 9, 2010

RE: Letter of Support for the Gulf Regional Sustainability Plan Proposal

Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District (SMPDD) supports the application for a Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant that the Gulf Regional Planning Commission is submitting on behalf of the applicant Consortium, and intends to participate in the Consortium to produce a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development if the application is approved.

This document constitutes proof of SMPDD's commitment to cooperatively carry out the Program described in the application GRPC is submitting on behalf of the Consortium as its lead applicant. In particular, SMPDD will exercise its best efforts to work with the other members of the Consortium to adopt and execute a partnership agreement within 120 days after the effective start date of the grant agreement.

The partnership agreement will (a) include a governance structure that reflects the diversity of the members of the Consortium, (b) allow for maximum participation in strategy development and decision-making, and (c) describe each Consortium member's specific activities under the Program, including timetables for completion.

SMPDD further acknowledges that the Department of Housing and Urban Development will have the right to terminate the grant to the Consortium if the Consortium fails to adopt and execute a partnership agreement meeting these requirements within 120 days after the effective start date of the grant agreement.

Finally, SMPDD will leverage [REDACTED] in project work through other resources including NOAA/Mississippi Department of Marine Resources and the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. Funds under these separate resources are not to be considered match, but the work product from them will be used in the sustainability plan being proposed.

Representing:

Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District

Signed by:

Leslie Newcomb / 8/20/10
Date

Leslie Newcomb, Executive Director

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™

August 19, 2010

Elaine Wilkinson
Executive Director
Gulf Regional Planning Commission
1232 Pass Road
Gulfport, MS 39501

Dear Elaine,

Mississippi State University is pleased to be a consortium member with the Gulf Regional Planning Commission on the proposed project entitled "Gulf Coast Regional Sustainability Plan". The University portion of the work is described in the proposal documents and will be performed under the direction of David Perkes, director of the Gulf Coast Community Design Studio. Mississippi State University will exercise its best efforts to work with the other members of the Consortium to adopt and execute a partnership agreement within 120 days after the effective start date of the grant agreement.

The amount requested from the Department of Housing and Urban Development for Mississippi State University's participation in this project is \$300,000 over three years. Mississippi State University will provide [REDACTED] match funding, which has been committed by the Gulf Coast Renaissance Corporation. Please see the attached letter from the Renaissance Corporation and the budget included in the grant proposal for a detailed explanation of costs.

Mississippi State University acknowledges that the Department of Housing and Urban Development will have the right to terminate the grant to the Consortium if the Consortium fails to adopt and execute a partnership agreement meeting these requirements within 120 days after the effective start date of the grant agreement.

We look forward to a rewarding and productive research effort.

Sincerely,



Richard Swann
Director

cc: SPA File

Sponsored Programs Administration

P. O. Box 6156 • 449 Hardy Road, 133 Etheredge Hall • Mississippi State, MS 39762 • (662) 325-7404 • FAX (662) 325-3803

August 17, 2010

Dear Elaine Wilkinson,

The Ohio State University Knowlton School of Architecture supports the application for a Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant that the Gulf Regional Planning Commission is submitting on behalf of the applicant Consortium, and intends to participate in the Consortium to produce a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development if the application is approved. This document constitutes proof of Ohio State University's commitment to cooperatively carry out the Program described in the application GRPC is submitting on behalf of the Consortium as its lead applicant.

The Ohio State University Knowlton School of Architecture is committing [REDACTED] in cost-share over the three-year requested grant period. This includes both in-kind and cash cost share.

The Ohio State University Knowlton School of Architecture will exercise its best efforts to work with the other members of the Consortium to adopt and execute a partnership agreement within 120 days after the effective start date of the grant agreement. The partnership agreement will (a) include a governance structure that reflects the diversity of the members of the Consortium, (b) allow for maximum participation in strategy development and decision-making, and (c) describe each Consortium member's specific activities under the Program, including timetables for completion. The Ohio State University Knowlton School of Architecture further acknowledges that the Department of Housing and Urban Development will have the right to terminate the grant to the Consortium if the Consortium fails to adopt and execute a partnership agreement meeting these requirements within 120 days after the effective start date of the grant agreement.

This document does not itself constitute adoption of a partnership agreement, but merely states a commitment to work in good faith towards such adoption as described above.

Sincerely,



Ann Pendleton-Jullian

Director, Knowlton School of Architecture



11975-H Seaway Road
Gulfport, MS 39503
Office: 228-896-3386
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www.msgcrc.com

August 11, 2010

Mr. David Perkes, AIA
Gulf Coast Community Design Studio
425 Division Street
Biloxi, MS 39530

Dear Mr. Perkes:

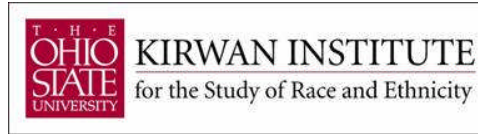
I understand that the Gulf Coast Community Design Studio will be assisting with the HUD Sustainable Communities grant and consortium. I also understand that the Design Studio has budgeted approximately [REDACTED] for support of this grant, which will be spread out evenly over the three year period of 2011, 2012 and 2013.

We approve the use of these funds, which are part of the money Renaissance has already committed for its work in the next three years and is not part of federal funds.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Kimberly LaRosa
President/CEO



August 3, 2010

The following includes our scope of services in relation to the collaborative sustainable communities regional planning grant proposal to be submitted by the Gulf Regional Planning Commission to the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development. The Institute will engage in this collaborative process to assist with designing public engagement activities and provide our opportunity mapping framework and analysis for planning purposes. Total external funding support required for the scope of activities presented below is **\$60,000**. (The total cost of this work is \$75,000, the additional costs to be offset with [REDACTED] in in-kind matching support from the Kirwan Institute, a 20% match.)

Scope of Services: Public Engagement with Disadvantaged Communities

The Institute will act as a partner to assist in designing public engagement activities explicitly targeted to disadvantaged communities. The Institute will advise in the design of activities and development of the engagement plan tailored to reach disadvantaged communities and other stakeholders servicing these communities.

Deliverables: The Institute will provide the following deliverables

- Best Practices assessment for engagement methods and strategies with marginalized communities (report to be provided)
- Direct consultation and advising to assist in structuring the design and approach of engagement activities, providing assistance in designing public engagement plan
- Giving training sessions to the collaborative partners to assist in fostering effective engagement methods for disadvantaged communities

Estimated Cost: \$30,000

In-Kind Support: ([REDACTED] in-kind match for services [REDACTED])

External Support Needed: [REDACTED]

Scope of Services: Opportunity Mapping Assessment & Training

The Institute will conduct an opportunity mapping assessment for the region, covering the Gulf Regional Planning Commission's service or planning area. The opportunity mapping assessment for the region would be grounded by advisory input from the Gulf Regional Planning Commission and diverse stakeholders involved in the collaborative planning process. Data indicators and geographic scale for analysis will be determined with the input from the Gulf Regional Planning Commission. The initiative can compliment other ongoing mapping assessments in the region and can contribute to local civic engagement and capacity building, providing a valuable resource to advocates, community leaders and stakeholders working to support investments and policy which build opportunities for disadvantaged communities in the region.

Deliverables:

- Completed “opportunity maps” for the region and digital copies of the maps (plus all supporting maps and overlays as requested by the commission)
- All data sets used to prepare the opportunity map and the final map provided in ESRI shapefile format for use in future planning activities
- A final report and analysis assessing the intersection between affordable housing (and other relevant policy issues as decided by partner organizations), disadvantaged populations and areas of high and low opportunity
- Summary of model policies & practices for expanding opportunity for disadvantaged communities
- An on-line interactive version of the opportunity map for broad dissemination
- A presentation of final results for the opportunity mapping assessment

Estimated Cost: \$45,000

In-Kind Support: ([REDACTED] in-kind match for services [REDACTED])

External Support Needed: [REDACTED]

Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race & Ethnicity: Organizational Background, Approach & Experience

The Kirwan Institute is a university-wide interdisciplinary research and policy oriented institute established at The Ohio State University in 2002. The focus of the Institute is national and global and is under the leadership of John A. Powell. The Institute works with national partners to advocate at the federal level and local partners to assist local organizations with applied research, advocacy and strategy development and to address other needs across the U.S. The Institute's primary focus is to promote a just and fair society for all.

The Institute is a national leader in utilizing community-based mapping or GIS (Geographic Information Systems) to both diagnose structural conditions impacting inequity, and identify strategic intervention points for advocacy and policy. The Institute has regularly worked as a GIS consultant to social justice organizations and community groups across the nation. The Kirwan Institute has a number of significant projects, research and collaborations to promote community development, fair housing and social justice through our "Opportunity Communities" model. The "Communities of Opportunity" framework is a model of fair housing and community development based on the premises that everyone should have fair access to the critical opportunity structures needed to succeed in life; and that affirmatively connecting people to opportunity creates positive, transformative change in communities. The Communities of Opportunity model advocates for a fair investment in all of a region's people and neighborhoods -- to improve the life outcomes of all citizens, and to improve the health of entire regions. The Institute utilizes mapping and our community of opportunity model to address racial/social equity challenges can promote community development for marginalized communities and affirmatively connect marginalized communities to critical opportunity structures, such as successful schools, safe neighborhoods and sustainable employment.

The organization's signature work has been its "opportunity mapping."ⁱ Opportunity mapping creates composite index maps based on numerous neighborhood indicators of community opportunity and vitality. Opportunity mapping can provide valuable information to address and the needs of marginalized or disadvantaged communities in the region; the following are some of the issues which can be illuminated by opportunity mapping:

- What are the best strategies to create opportunity and provide neighborhood safety or stability in an opportunity- poor community? Are policies depressing opportunity in an opportunity- poor community? What neighborhoods are at risk of becoming low-opportunity communities?
- What policies can help connect marginalized people with opportunities in the region? Where is affordable housing needed in opportunity- rich communities within the region?
- Which neighborhoods are significantly impacting the quality of life and development of children in the region? What children are most at risk?
- What are the neighborhood conditions for neighborhoods impacted by foreclosure? Where should asset- building activities be targeted? Where are predatory or discriminatory credit instruments limiting the economic potential for communities?

This mapping, research and community engagement and community advocacy model has several broad goals and advocacy outcomes. These goals could include:

- To raise significant attention and awareness to the structural and community barriers impacting marginalized communities. To identify policy solutions to remedy barriers to opportunity for marginalized communities. To provide an entry point for starting consensus building or collaborative discussions among stakeholders.
- To provide a local resource to identify areas of greatest need in communities and assess “gaps” where need is not being met by on-going advocacy efforts, local initiatives, investments or policy initiatives.
- To utilize the mapping to inform and guide advocacy campaigns, policy advocacy and community planning. To provide data, analysis and recommendations to help build local organizational capacity in understanding challenges, needs and strategies for marginalized neighborhoods. To provide a collaborative framework to collectively organize the strategic planning of multiple stakeholders in communities.

Opportunity mapping and the opportunity model also supports sustainable and responsible growth, primarily through directly bringing an equity lens into analysis. Sustainable growth should seek to reduce barriers to reaching sustainable employment for low- income workers and families. Equally important is a need to ensure residents have access to other critical opportunity structures that are needed to survive and thrive in our society, such as safe communities and high- performing schools. Sustainable and responsible growth principles should ensure that housing policy does not support concentrated poverty. Sustainable growth should also ensure that the fair housing rights of all residents are upheld and that low- income families, especially families of color, do not find their housing options reduced to only a few segregated, distressed neighborhoods. Our opportunity model seeks to balance the priorities listed above, to both revitalize distressed communities while also providing life changing pathways to opportunity for marginalized families and communities. This is a model which supports the principles of sustainable planning and long term responsible growth

Opportunity maps have been utilized in policy advocacy, litigation, applied research, community organizing, coalition building and to inform service delivery. As an applied research institute, GIS work conducted by Kirwan is intended to have direct impact on policy decisions and real world advocacy issues. In recent years, the Institute’s GIS staff has devoted more time to training users in the social justice field to utilize GIS and is exploring the implementation of on-line GIS applications. Recent partners who have partnered with the Institute to conduct opportunity mapping include: Maryland ACLU, NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Poverty Race & Research Action Council, The Miami Workers Center, The Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Center, Green Doors (formerly the Austin Coalition for the Homeless), The Presidents’ Council of Cleveland, The Michigan Roundtable for Diversity & Inclusion, ISIAIH (MN Gamaliel affiliate), The Connecticut Fair Housing Center, Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, Washington County Oregon Department of Community Development and the Northwest Justice Project.

The following provides a brief summary of community engagement activities, for a small sample of previous Kirwan Institute opportunity mapping projects. The following descriptions focus on local engagement activities to help define the process and guide project outcomes. All mapping initiatives have included some form of direct partner/community engagement, which has helped define scope, data definitions and or project outcomes/deliverables.

Massachusetts Opportunity Mapping: This project assessed access to neighborhoods of opportunity in Massachusetts. An “opportunity mapping” analysis was commissioned by the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute and funded by Massachusetts Legal Services Programs. The

goal of the opportunity mapping initiative was to understand how low income groups and racial and ethnic populations were situated in Massachusetts's geography of opportunity. The initiative not only provided a tool to support advocacy and policy reform, but also provided an analytical lens to view the challenges and potential remedies for legal aid clients in the State of Massachusetts. Legal aid advocates have used the opportunity mapping work as part of their larger statewide advocacy efforts, targeting legal services and in affordable housing advocacy. The process for this initiative began with the formation of an advisory group comprised of racial justice advocates and representatives of various legal aid organizations throughout the state. A series of trainings, presentations and workshops with this steering committee helped guide and refine the mapping initiative from its inception to its completion and in follow up implementation activities. The steering committee worked in collaboration with the Institute over the course of a year, and was instrumental in guiding the mapping analysis, data collected and deliverables to be useful in both advocacy efforts but also to meet the needs of their clients.

Columbus Neighborhood Revitalization Assessment: The assessment produced for the Columbus Foundation, merged mapping with several series of interviews to help diagnose the best potential strategies and neighborhoods for neighborhood revitalization in Columbus. The work began is a series of interviews with community leaders, civic organizations and other community development interests in the City. These early interviews were combined with mapping analysis of demographic, housing and investment trends in the City. Upon merging the qualitative and quantitative analysis to define the possibility for revitalization across the city's neighborhoods, a second round of more in depth interview were conducted in the top ranking neighborhoods in the City. These additional interviews with community members, neighborhood leadership and civic organizations help gauge the non-quantitative assets and impediments in the community, such as the depth and extent of neighborhood leadership, the impact of institutional partners, levels of community engagement and neighborhood conflict.

The Central Texas Opportunity Initiative: The Kirwan Institute has utilized GIS to support coalition and community capacity building. Work conducted in Austin, TX is a prime example of how mapping can help build coalitions around the multitude of challenges facing local distressed communities. Under the leadership of executive director Frank Fernandez, the Central Texas Opportunity Initiative (led by Community Coalition for the Homeless in Austin, Texas, now renamed "Green Doors") commissioned the Kirwan Institute to conduct a neighborhood-based opportunity mapping analysis for the Austin region. The purpose of the initiative was to explore the distribution of opportunities and healthy neighborhoods in the Austin region, and to explore the location of marginalized communities in relation to regional resources. In addition, the mapping provided a window of opportunity to explore the context of pending policy and development decisions in the region. A wide coalition of advocates, stakeholders, leaders and service providers in the region was established to steer the initiative. Over a six month period the steering committee worked with the Institute in developing the opportunity maps, acquiring data and guiding maps to be created for the project. The report presented the results of the analysis to the broader community, and the Homeless Coalition utilized the opportunity maps to bring diverse stakeholders together (from the fields of public health, education, housing, public transit and community development) to spark discussion on what actions and policies were needed to provide opportunities to succeed for Austin's marginalized residents and communities. Frank Fernandez has reconvened some of the leading institutional partners from the first phase of this work to begin discussing a second opportunity mapping initiative which would be more directly incorporated into assisting in the implementation of policy initiatives by

partners, used for advocacy and potentially integrated into the strategic plans of institutional partners.

King County (Seattle) Opportunity Mapping: The King County mapping initiative is an ongoing initiative with an emphasis on integrating opportunity mapping with fair housing, fair lending and community revitalization. The mapping initiative began with direct guidance and engagement with the Northwest Justice Project to assist in defining the mapping parameters and scope of analysis. After completing an initial first round of opportunity maps and analysis, the Institute coordinated a region wide workshop focused on facilitated discussion with nearly sixty local advocates, community leaders and public sector representatives to discuss impediments and solutions to addressing fair housing, fair lending and community revitalization in the Seattle (King County) area. The workshop also presented the first round of opportunity mapping analysis, to all stakeholders as a diagnostic tool to address the fair housing, fair credit and community revitalization goals discussed earlier. The mapping workshop sought input and participation from attendees to help guide the final revisions and changes to the maps as well as tailoring the mapping to be useful to their ongoing advocacy efforts.

ⁱ For more detailed information related to our opportunity mapping work, please refer to the following reports, available on our website at: www.kirwaninstitute.org

- [The Geography of Opportunity: A Review of Opportunity Mapping Research Initiatives](#) (pdf file) Jason Reece and Samir Gambhir (September 2008)
- Mapping for Social Justice (pages 13 to 17 for Kirwan specific information): Available online via the following link - [GIS Mapping Research](#)